



Senator Sheila Kuehl

23rd District Newsletter • September 2006

Universal Healthcare Bill on Governor's Desk

By Sara Rogers, Legislative Consultant

On August 31st, 2006, the California Legislature made history, sending a universal healthcare bill to the Governor -- just in time for Labor Day. Its passage comes on the heels of the release of the 2005 U.S. Census Report which states that another 1.3 million Americans had lost their health insurance, including 8.3 million children -- with the largest rise coming from families earning more than \$50,000 a year. This is the sixth straight year of steeply increasing levels of uninsurance. This, along with years of double-digit increases in the cost of health care, paints a dismal picture and indicates the need for comprehensive reform.

SB 840 establishes, for the first time, a concrete plan for achieving universal health care in California. The plan covers every resident of the state with comprehensive health insurance that guarantees every Californian free choice of their doctors and hospitals while saving California families an average of \$600-\$3000 depending on income. Businesses are expected to save an average of 16% off employee health insurance costs, while state and local government is projected to save \$900 million in the first year on employee benefit costs.

As amended, the bill is funded by drawing in current public spending, which itself covers almost half of the cost; the remainder coming from replacing the premiums, co-pays and deductibles paid to insurance companies with premiums paid to the system. The bill calls on a bipartisan blue ribbon panel of health finance and technical experts to develop the mechanics for the premium.

The day before SB 840's final passage on the Senate floor, sponsors of the bill attended a California Nurses Association and Health Care for All sponsored rally attended by the California School Employees Association, California Church Impact, the California Teachers Association, the California Physicians Alliance, and the League of Women Voters, among many others -- forming an ecstatic crowd of

almost 500 participants who chanted "Sign this bill" outside Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's Capitol office suite.

Senator Kuehl was joined by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero who spoke of SB 840's importance to California, expressing their commitment to achieving universal health care.



On Tuesday, Sept. 5th, to the dismay of thousands of Californians inspired by the bill's passage, the Governor announced a knee-jerk intention to veto the bill; even though the bill had not yet reached his desk. His proposed veto statement makes it very clear that he has taken no time to understand the bill, and given his failure to offer up his own plan, supporters of universal health care are rising up to

voice their disappointment in the Governor's lack of leadership on health care.

Senator Kuehl is asking every person who cares about health care reform to call, write and fax the Governor expressing their strong feelings against a veto and their strong support for SB 840. His office can be contacted at (916) 445-2841. For more information on ongoing regional events in support of SB 840, please visit www.healthcareforall.org. ❖

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Twenty-One Kuehl Bills Sent to Governor in August

By Jennifer Richard, Legislative Director

In August, the last month of the 2006-2007 Legislative Session, hundreds of bills moved to the Governor's desk for his consideration. Among those bills were 21 measures by Senator Kuehl, four of which have already been signed into law, with the remaining 17 awaiting the Governor's signature or veto. The Governor has until September 30 to sign or veto the bills. Those bills sent to the Governor this August by Senator Kuehl were in the areas of civil rights, health, human services, labor, natural resources, and transportation. A brief summary of each bill and the disposition of the bill at the time this newsletter was published are listed below.

Civil Rights

SB 1437: Bias-Free Curriculum Act.

SB 1437 expands existing laws prohibiting discrimination in textbooks, instructional materials, and school sponsored activities, which currently prohibit bias on the bases of race, sex, disability, nationality and religion, to include sexual orientation and gender identity. This measure is necessary because anti-LGBT school harassment still occurs at alarming rates. Slurs and violence are already far too common, and students should not be required to study materials in their classrooms that reinforce these negative stereotypes and prejudice. *Status: Vetoed by Governor*

SB 1441: Bias Free State Funded Programs & Services

SB 1441 expands the prohibition of discrimination in state operated or funded services, activities and programs to include actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity. This important measure ensures fair and equal treatment in services provided with the assistance of public dollars. *Status: Signed by Governor*

Health

SB 840: Healthcare for All

This measure establishes, for the first time, a concrete plan for achieving universal health care in California. The plan covers every resident of the state with comprehensive health insurance that guarantees every Californian with free choice of their doctors and hospitals while saving California families an average of \$600-\$3000 a year depending on income. Businesses are expected to save an average of 16% off employee health insurance costs, while state and local governments are projected to save \$900 million in the first year on employee benefit costs.

As amended, the bill is funded by drawing in current public spending which itself covers half of the cost; the remainder coming replacing the premiums, co-pays and deductibles paid to insurance companies with premiums paid to the system. The bill calls on a bipartisan blue ribbon panel

of health finance and technical experts to develop the mechanics for the premium. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1471: CA Community Sexual Health Education Act

SB 1471 builds upon existing law establishing basic standards for sexual health education in our schools and applies those common sense standards to all publicly funded sexual health education programs.

Although California has been successful in reducing overall rates of unintended pregnancy, not all residents have benefited equally. Many communities of color, rural communities and low-income communities lack access to timely health services and information and continue to experience disproportionately high rates of teen pregnancies and STDs.

State-funded sexual health programs are concentrated in these communities with the greatest need. Ensuring that these programs provide comprehensive, medically accurate, and unbiased sexual health education is of vital importance in these underserved populations. *Status: Pending with Governor*

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California Labor Federation Unanimously Endorses Universal Healthcare Bill

On Wednesday, July 26, 2006, the California Labor Federation voted, unanimously, to endorse SB 840, resolving to "work fiercely" for the passage of the bill. The resolution stated that, "All unions and our members are struggling with spiraling health care costs, and we have seen the suffering of the 70,000 grocery workers in a bitter four-month strike over the cost of health care which has become a crucial contract issue nationwide."

Angie Wei, Legislative Director for the California Labor Federation, commented "Labor is united in its conviction that SB 840, by insuring every Californian, guaranteeing our right to choose our own doctor and controlling healthcare costs will bring true, lasting healthcare reform in a way that's fair to employees and employers alike. SB 840 has become an important item in our agenda, and we are determined to see that this bill becomes law."

Their resolution in support indicates the development of a broad consensus toward universal health care that spans labor, the faith based community, health care advocates, small businesses, teachers, nurses, doctors, and every Californian struggling with our failing health care system. ❖

Historic Site Will be Home to Restored Creek

by Laura Plotkin, Chief Deputy, District Office

Headwaters Corner, located at the northwest corner of Old Topanga Road and Mulholland Highway in Calabasas, is home to the nonprofit Mountains Restoration Trust, which has been preserving precious areas within the Cold Creek Watershed for the public for over 25 years. This 12-acre cultural resource and environmental interpretive center contains two single-family structures, one of which was built around 1895, which have been adapted by the Trust and its partner, the City of Calabasas, for resource education classes on Dry Canyon Creek, a perennial headwater of the Los Angeles River.

Utilizing a systems approach to explain how our natural world is made up of a multitude of interacting parts that present themselves as whole, rather than separate components, the Trust uses examples of natural and cultural history to teach visitors about how people can co-exist with the land and its animals through responsible stewardship of natural resources.

The Dry Canyon Creek Restoration Project, which begins on the site in September of this year, will reverse damages to the land caused over the last 100 years by the creation of ill-conceived creek-crossings, diversions and control features. These unfortunate attempts by previous owners of the site to bend nature for practical purposes have resulted in flooding, creek bank failures and stream-bank erosion. The restoration project will implement sound flood management and stream-bed erosion control procedures to improve natural stream function, increase flood protection, reduce erosion, and restore the riparian habitat along the creek.

The methods to be used include removing two man-made in-stream structures and replacing them with clear span



From left: James Dean, Landscape Architect and Oak Tree Consultant; Senator Kuehl's District Director Laura Plotkin; Debbie Bruschaber, MRT's Project Manager; and David Magney, Restoration Ecologist with David Magney Environmental Consulting at a July 12th presentation of the Dry Canyon Creek Restoration Project at Mountains Restoration Trust's Headwaters Corner in Calabasas. Photo by Toby Keeler.

bridges, removing stream-bed and bank armoring consisting of grouted and un-grouted concrete and asphalt rubble, re-contouring the steep stream banks to terraced slopes, planting native wetland and riparian to stabilize stream banks and increase habitat, and removing invasive non-native plants.

Funding for the project, which should be completed in May of 2007, comes from the federal Army Corps of Engineers' In-Lieu Fee Program and from a grant by the State of California's Department of Water Resources Urban Stream Restoration Program. For more information about this project, volunteer opportunities or educational programs at Headwaters Corner, please call (818) 591-1701. ❖

Staff Changes

A number of staff to Senator Kuehl experienced changes in their lives recently requiring them to leave our service. Ernestine McAlister, our long time Capitol Office manager, retired after many years of service to the Legislature. Prior to working for Senator Kuehl, Ernestine worked for Judge (then Assemblymember) Terry Friedman, who represented the 41st Assembly District, next represented by Senator Kuehl.

Hilda Garcia, our District Office field representative in both Los Angeles and Oxnard, was lured away, at least temporarily, to work in a number of initiative campaigns that have taken her heart. She will return after the November election.



Jon Snowden, our Senate Fellow for 2005-06, is now beginning a doctoral program in epidemiology at the University of California, Berkeley. Jon received his bachelor's degree from Stanford. Despite the fact that he had just graduated college and was serving as a Senate staffer,

Senator Kuehl assigned him to staff her bills on foster care, curriculum bias, and transportation, all of which passed both houses of the Legislature.

Keely Bosler, consultant to the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, was the incredibly capable staffer working with Senator Kuehl as she chaired Budget Subcommittee #2 on Resources, Environmental Protection,

(STAFF continued on page 9)

LGBT Caucus Honors Six Outstanding Individuals with the First-Ever LGBT Pride Recognition Awards

By Eric Astacaan, LGBT Caucus Consultant

The California Legislative Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Caucus presented its first-ever LGBT Pride Recognition Awards to six outstanding individuals at a ceremony during the California State Assembly floor session on Monday, August 14, 2006. These individuals were honored in recognition of their extraordinary accomplishments and leadership in their respective fields of endeavors.

The honorees were:

- Bishop Dr. Yvette A. Flunder, Senior Pastor, City of Refuge United Church of Christ in San Francisco - In recognition of her remarkable achievements and leadership in faith, community activism, and health and human services.
- The Honorable James Hormel, former U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg and founder / chairman of Equidex, Inc., a San-Francisco-based firm that manages his family's philanthropic investments - In recognition of his extraordinary achievements in public service, business, and philanthropy.
- Ms. Honey Labrador, Los Angeles-based filmmaker, model, TV host: Bravo's *Queer Eye for the Straight Girl* - In recognition of her outstanding achievements and leadership in fashion, film and television.
- Ms. Kathy Levinson, former E*Trade Chief Operating Officer and President, founder of the Silicon Valley-based Lesbian Equity Foundation - In recognition of her exceptional achievements and leadership in business, community activism, and philanthropy.
- Mr. Reichen Lehmkuhl, former U.S. Air Force captain, graduate of the Air Force Academy, Los Angeles-based model / actor - in recognition of his wonderful achievements and leadership in military service, film and television.
- Mr. Esera Tuaolo, former NFL defensive lineman for the Atlanta Falcons, Minnesota Vikings, Green Bay Packers, singer / actor - In recognition of his great achievements and leadership in sports, music, and theatre.

"These individuals are important role models, not only for the LGBT community, but for all of America," said Senator Sheila Kuehl. "We are thrilled to honor all of them. They demonstrate all the wonderful things that are possible when strength, conviction, and dignity overcome stereotypes, homophobia, and discrimination."



LGBT Pride Recognition Honorees (From left to right) – Esera Tuaolo, Kathy Levinson, Bishop Yvette Flunder, Ambassador Jim Hormel, Honey Labrador, and Reichen Lehmkuhl.

The California Legislative LGBT Caucus was formed in June 2002. The members include Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg, Caucus Chair, Senators Christine Kehoe, Sheila Kuehl, and Carole Migden, and Assemblymembers John Laird and Mark Leno. The caucus' role is to present a forum for the California Legislature to discuss issues that affect lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Californians and to further the goal of equality and justice for all Californians. The founding of the California LGBT Legislative Caucus made California the first state in the country to recognize an official caucus of openly-LGBT state legislators. ❖

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End-of-Session Traditions at the Capitol

How food, a statue, games, and more food interact to commemorate the conclusion of the legislative session

By Mia Orr, Legislative Aide

August is the legislature's busiest time of the year, because all bills must pass both houses by the end of the month in order to be signed into law by the governor. Late night sessions are common, meals are missed, and much sleep is lost as senators and assemblymembers fight to get their bills passed into the wee hours of the morning, and staffers fight right along with them. To quell the anxiety, fatigue, and stress, capitol folks have found ways to stay jovial amidst the madness. The following will give you a glimpse at the end-of-session traditions that went on here at the Capitol:

Legislative All-Star Game:

This tradition started 6 years ago and pits the (shocking, of course) Democrats vs. the Republicans. The game was played at the Sacramento Rivercats stadium in West Sacramento and featured several athletically-inclined legislators from both houses. This year the Republicans took the victory, but the real winners were the non-profit Special Olympics and Rivercats Foundation, who received the proceeds from the game.

Memorials:

Senators who have maxed out their two 4-year terms are celebrated by their fellow Senators in Floor Memorial ceremonies. Families and friends are invited to join their respective Senator on the floor of the Senate, as other senators recount anecdotes, stories, and heap praise on their colleague for their past 8 years of service to the legislature and the State of California.

Often the senators get creative with their tributes to their colleagues, using props and costumes to illustrate their stories or emphasize an individual's role in the legislature. For instance, all senators wore hats in honor of Senator Debra Bowen's (SD 28-Marina Del Rey) many roles in the legislature, for Senator Kevin Murray (SD 26- Los Angeles) the members donned sunglasses and were presented with mini Academy Awards, and for Senator Richard Alarcon, all the members (and even the desk staff) wore giant mustaches. We also enjoyed songs in honor of the Senate's best singer (lead singer in Martha and the Members) Senator Martha Escutia (SD 30- Whittier). Senator Kuehl, who also has a good voice, sang "Don't Cry For Me Sacramento".

The senator receiving the tribute often uses that time as an opportunity to reflect on their years of service and publicly thank all of the folks that worked with them over the years on key legislation and in their districts.

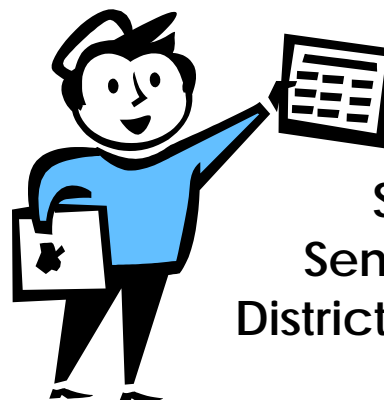
Office Parties:

As aforementioned, it is common for staffers to get so wrapped up in the duties of the day that they forget to eat. In order to make sure staffers are fed, various offices will bring food to share with the rest of the building during the last week of session. Each floor will pick a day to have a progressive potluck, and staffers go from office to office piling their plates with goodies.

Offices on a floor might pick themes like Mediterranean or Mexican, or just go straight to the good stuff with dessert smorgasbords. The Kuehl staff heartily participates in this annual tradition, and this year contributed dozens of cookies from the Freeport Bakery in Sacramento, which were quickly gobbled up. There were also fresh fruits and veggies, burgers, fried chicken, Chinese food, two nacho bars, along with many cakes, pies, and chocolates to choose from. It sounds like a lot of food but after all, a fed staffer is a productive staffer!

These office parties not only feed us, they also provide excellent networking opportunities with members of other legislators' staffs, especially those from the other political party. Just because we spend the year arguing over each other's bills, doesn't mean we can't still be friends, right?

Regardless of the food, it's a tradition that staffers plan to continue for a long time. And if we were worried about the calories, our Chief of Staff Carol Wallisch says don't: we've declared an office policy that all food consumed during the last week of session doesn't count. I think the Senate and Assembly should pass a joint resolution about it just to make sure.... ❖



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Staff Profile: Emily Gold

By Emily Gold, Field Representative

I first met Senator Kuehl in the 1980's when she was Associate Dean of Students at UCLA. She had rented the guest-house on our family property in Venice, CA. I was 12 years old at the time and I used to sneak into her house through the window when she was not at home (though I found out later she knew exactly what I was doing and left the window unlocked for me) to practice shooting pool on her pool table. Now, twenty plus years later, I am working for Senator Kuehl as a field deputy in her district office, a position I have held for the last eight years.

Initially my primary responsibilities for Senator Kuehl were limited to constituent casework, intern coordination and district office liaison with various communities.

Constituent casework means assisting residents of the 23rd Senate District navigate the various state departments and agencies in California and advocating for their myriad needs and concerns.

I have also been responsible for training, organizing and coordinating interns and volunteers. Students from UCLA, Santa Monica College and local high schools work in the district office several hours each week.

As Field Deputy for Senator Kuehl, I am one of the staff members in our District Office, serving as the "eyes and ears of the district" and represent Senator Kuehl on many issues. Since we cover geographic areas as well as issues, I cover the City of West Hollywood. I staff the Senator on issues relating to the LGBT community, seniors, families, women and domestic violence. I also represent Senator Kuehl at meetings and events to provide feedback to Senator Kuehl and to inform the community about legislation and issues she is working on in Sacramento.

Four years ago Senator Kuehl introduced the universal healthcare bill that, in this session, is SB 840, The California Health Insurance and Reliability Act. Before that time, I worked on a wide range of issues, but when I became the point person in our office for SB 840, I discovered I needed

to acquire a more detailed understanding of our healthcare system. Not surprisingly, this turned out to be a full time job. The more I learned about healthcare policy, the more I saw the need to completely reform our healthcare system in California. I have become a passionate advocate in the fight for universal healthcare.

The coalition of SB 840 supporters now includes thousands of individuals and hundreds of organizations. There are many facets to this task, including being a liaison between with the public and Senator Kuehl and our capitol staff. Individuals and organizations throughout California inquire daily about the status and details of SB 840.

I often speak about the bill and our broken healthcare system to such groups as the Gray Panthers, Community Clinics, healthcare providers, and numerous advocacy organizations throughout Southern California. Healthcare touches us all and there is no limit to the number of people who are interested in learning more about this bill.

Our office continually updates materials and handouts explaining the bill. I need to stay informed about the most recent healthcare studies. All this information must then be conveyed to advocates working in support of SB 840 so that they may remain knowledgeable about the issue.

Additionally, information must be communicated to Senator Kuehl and our Sacramento staff.

I oversee and maintain a database of thousands of Californians and provide timely information about the progress of the bill as it makes its way through the legislative process.

I feel fortunate to work with a incredibly dedicated, passionate group of co-workers in the district and capitol office as well as advocates who give so much time to ensuring that healthcare reform is achieved in our lifetime. It is exciting to work on something for which I have great passion. The energy and momentum has grown tremendously. Thanks to the tireless leadership of Senator Kuehl, and to all the people working on this bill, SB 840 became the first universal healthcare bill ever to pass both houses of the Legislature, a truly historic event! ❖



It is exciting to work on something for which I have great passion.



23rd Senate District. The 23rd Senate District includes the cities of Agoura Hills, Beverly Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Santa Monica, West Hollywood and Westlake Village and the communities of Bel Air, Brentwood, Canoga Park, Encino, Hollywood, Mt. Olympus, Pacific Palisades, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Tarzana, Topanga, West Los Angeles, West Hills, Westwood and Woodland Hills.

Senator Kuehl Celebrates Labor Day at March and Rally

By Emily Gold, Field Representative

This year, the city of Wilmington celebrated its 27th Labor Day March and Rally. The parade included marchers and floats from locals and statewide unions, including the California Nurses' Association, United Steelworkers, American Federal State and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), UTLA, Unite HERE, and many others.

Senator Kuehl rode on a float sponsored by the Nurses and the Steelworkers, who are among the many unions that support SB 840, Senator Kuehl's single payer universal healthcare bill. It was a hot summer day, as homemade floats, old hot rod cars and marching bands made their way through the streets of Wilmington. Thousands of workers, union members and their allies marched, rode and lined the streets and waved as the marchers passed by. Following the parade, a rally was held in nearby Banning Park. Volunteers and organizers gave out food, fliers and educational materials on a number of labor issues, including postcards addressed to the Governor urging him to sign SB 840. ❖



(LEGISLATION continued from page 2)

SB 1704: California Health Benefits Review Program

SB 1704 extends, till 2011, the sunset date for the California Health Benefits Review Program (CHBRP) and expands its scope of services. CHBRP is an independent program that utilizes the expertise and scientific resources of the University of California to provide objective, science-based health policy information to the legislature and the public. The program evaluates legislation proposing mandated health insurance benefits on the basis of medical efficacy, cost-effectiveness, and public health impact, and these analyses are then used by the legislature to make informed policy decisions. This information is useful to policymakers because it helps ensure that policy decisions are informed by un-biased, science-based information. *Status: Pending with Governor*

Human Services

SB 1569: Critical Services for Immigrant Survivors of Human Trafficking

SB 1569, sponsored by the California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative and the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, provides access to critical services for immigrant survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence and other serious crimes, while they are waiting for processing from the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security or the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Under existing law, immigrant victims of human trafficking, domestic violence and other serious crimes have ac-

cess to most federal and state services, but not until federal certification is complete. During the interim period, victims in critical need do not have access to basic services to protect their health and safety. Victims of these crimes desperately need a safe and appropriate place to live, immediate attention to their physical and mental health needs, and an opportunity to acquire skills so that they can begin to rebuild their lives and participate in the prosecution of their traffickers or perpetrators.

SB 1569 serves as a bridge for these survivors, helping a small number of persons in great need before they transition to existing state or federal services. SB 1569 would treat these survivors like refugees for purposes of determining eligibility for state and local benefits and services, allowing them to access critical medical care, mental health, and basic assistance to help them secure safe housing, food, and supportive services. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1616: Fair Chance Act

SB 1616 will ensure that as part of re-entry planning before youth are released from the Department of Juvenile Justice, they are assessed to determine their eligibility for Medi-Cal and Supplemental Security Income disability benefits. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1667: Foster Care

SB 1667 mandates that foster parents be notified of post-permanency planning hearings, and also be given the op-

(LEGISLATION continued on page 8)

portunity to attend these hearings and present information to the court. This bill requires child welfare agencies to attach a copy of the Judicial Council *Caregiver Information Form* (JV-290) to the form that is sent to foster parents to notify them of status review hearings and permanency hearings. Ensuring that foster parents receive this information serves the interests of the children as well as the needs of the court, by making certain that judicial officers have all relevant information before them when they make placement decisions. *Status: Pending with Governor*

Labor

SB 697: Child Care Providers

SB 697 would provide family child care providers the right to collectively negotiate on issues that affect their businesses. The bill comes out of a much larger child care reform bill that Senator Kuehl authored earlier this year, SB 1600, which was held in Senate Appropriations Committee earlier this year because of costs. SB 697 is much narrower in scope and has no cost to the state. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1745: Employment Discrimination

SB 1745 declares that it is against the public policy of the state for any person to discharge or harass any individual, or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against any individual, in compensation, or in other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because the individual is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking face severe economic barriers when they attempt to leave those who have victimized them. Because of this, the ability to keep a job is vital to the independence and recovery of victims of these crimes. When victims face the additional obstacle of employment discrimination based solely on their status as a victim, when they are fired or demoted or retaliated against, it can further hinder their efforts to survive the violence. Additionally, the efforts of law enforcement officers to investigate and prosecute these violent crimes are impeded when victims live in fear of adverse employment actions.

Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking should not be forced to choose between their economic independence and their safety. *Status: Pending with Governor*

Natural Resources

SB 668: Mining

This bill makes several improvements to the state mining laws. Among them, the bill improves the process by which state and local government communicate with each other about proposed new mines or reclamation plans, aligns the statutes with the current organization of the Department of

Conservation, prohibits local governments from buying materials from mines that do not have reclamation plans, requires access to property when a public agency is reclaiming mined land, and modifies three existing exemptions from the state mining laws. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1425: Ground Water Extraction

This bill requires the State Water Resources Control Board to designate a local agency to receive and maintain groundwater extraction data, provided the local agency meets all the statutorily established requirements. This bill also allows a local agency agree to accept and maintain extraction data for groundwater users outside the agency's district boundaries. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1535: Department of Fish and Game and Fish and Game Commission

This bill makes several changes for the benefit of the Department of Fish and Game and the Fish and Game Commission. It raises fees paid by those whose projects are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, requires the Commission to adopt a code of ethics, and requires the department to provide a fund balance for all the accounts within the Fish and Game Preservation Fund in order to provide more budgetary transparency. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1574: Delta Study

This bill creates a cabinet-level committee chaired by the Secretary of the Resources Agency to develop a strategic vision for a sustainable Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1583: Marvin Braude Bikeway

SB 1583 names the 22.3 mile beach bicycle path in Los Angeles the "Marvin Braude Bikeway." Marvin Braude was a visionary and tenacious public servant who represented the Westside on the Los Angeles City Council from 1965 to 1997. He was well known for his persistence and determination, but will probably most fondly be remembered for his dedication to protecting open space and parks. Councilman Braude helped to preserve open space in the Santa Monica Mountains and was key to the creation of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreational Area. In the early 1970s, Marv Braude, an avid cyclist, spearheaded an effort to build a bike path along a well traveled part of Venice Beach and beyond. Today, the very popular 22.3 mile beach bicycle path runs from the Will Rogers State Beach to the City of Torrance. SB 1583 honors his great influence on the State and the Los Angeles region by naming the bike path in his honor. *Status: Signed by Governor*

(LEGISLATION continued on page 9)

SB 1640: Water Resources Planning

SB 1640 would help fill the critical information gaps that currently hinder effective water resources planning. The bill will reinforce existing water rights reporting requirements, promote local management of groundwater basins, make urban water management planning more open and transparent, reinstate agricultural water management planning, and ensure that this information will be made widely available to all who need it. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1686: Climate Change and Wildlife Conservation Board

This bill authorizes the Wildlife Conservation Board to take climate change into account when it buys forestland or acquires easements on forestlands. Proper forest management and reforestation have the potential to sequester carbon dioxide and mitigate the releases of carbon from the transportation, land development, and utility sectors, thereby helping to reduce the accumulation of greenhouse gases.

Status: Pending with Governor

SB 1843: Revisions to California Coastal Act and the Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Act

SB 1843 is an omnibus bill from the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee that makes updates and clarifies the California Coastal Act and the Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy Act. In addition to the more technical changes, SB 1843 allows the State Coastal Commission to process a single coastal development permit for a project that falls under the jurisdiction of both the commission and a local government with a certified local coastal program in order to streamline duplicative permit processes in this unique situation. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1844: Revisions to Public Resources Code

SB 1844 is a non-controversial committee omnibus bill that removes four outdated provisions from the Public Resources Code. *Status: Signed by Governor*

SB 1845: Ocean Protection Council

This bill expands the membership of the Ocean Protection Council from 3 to 5. With three voting members, a quorum is 2, which effectively means that any conversation between two members on a future agenda item would be prohibited by the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act. By adding two public members, this problem disappears. Moreover, by adding two public members, one who specializes in ocean science, and one who specializes in ocean policy issues, the effectiveness of the Council will also be improved. The governor would make these two new appointments. *Status: Pending with Governor*

SB 1846: Revisions to Shipwreck and Historic Maritime Resources Program

SB 1846 is a committee omnibus bill that makes clarifications to the Shipwreck and Historic Maritime Resources Program. This bill clarifies the types of permits that the State Lands Commission can issue for salvage operations, the conditions under which the commission can renew these permits, and the actions the Commission can take either to prevent or stop activities that can damage submerged resources. This bill also contains provisions to assure that the Commission can properly recover reimbursable costs from permit applications. The need for most of these changes was discovered during the salvage of the Brother Jonathan, a ship that sank off the California coast near Crescent city. Questions that arose during salvage operations at this site made it abundantly clear that the statutes needed to be more specific about the tools available to the Commission to protect our submerged cultural resources. *Status: Signed by Governor*

Transportation

SB 1384: Expo/ MTA Light Rail

Senate Bill 1384 amends SB 504 (Kuehl, 2003), a bill that created the Exposition Construction Authority (Authority) in order to facilitate the construction of the Expo Light Rail Project in Los Angeles. Senate Bill 504 mirrored SB 1847 (Schiff, 1998), which created the Gold Line Construction Authority that successfully built the Gold Line from Downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena. This legislation will assist the Authority in the planning (along with the MTA) and construction of the Exposition Light Rail Project from downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica and will enable the project to be built quickly and efficiently. *Status: Pending with Governor* ❖

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and Energy. Keely has accepted a new assignment in Senate Budget and is now the consultant to Subcommittee #4 on State Administration, General Government, Judiciary, Public Safety, and Transportation.



Dr. Al Manetta

Our University of California, Irvine contingent returned to Irvine. Dr. Al Manetta, who had a Faculty Fellowship through the UC Policy Research Center in our Capitol Office, returned to his duties as Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs for the UCI medical school. He had also arranged for one of his students, Mo Shahsahabi, to spend time in our Capitol Office working with other staff on SB 840, Senator Kuehl's universal health care bill. Mo has now returned to UC Irvine, as a second year medical student. ❖